

SENATOR WESELY: Yes.

SENATOR L. JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you, Senator Wesely. I think that in view of that and the Appropriations Committee held the very same information at the time that we made our recommendation. We did meet, as Senator Warner indicated, many hours in discussion of the insurance plan for state employees and we did implement that recommendation of the special committee in LB 722. We looked hard at combining the health coverage with a dental plan but that just wasn't possible this year, and what we finally selected I think, as Senator Warner indicated also, was that we selected among the options presented to us the cost containment plan. It was the lowest cost alternative at the time and provides the best coverage for those of our state employees. I do not support this amendment and recommend that you vote against the motion because it would not help with our budget problems at this time and it could certainly promote budget problems for our state employees. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator DeCamp is next but may I introduce some guest of Senator Chronister. We have Janet and Ted NicholSEN and daughters, Kathy and Margaret of Seattle, Washington, and another daughter Susie Litofe and her children, Tim and Laura of Portland, Oregon. Would you folks please stand and be recognized, under the south balcony. Thank you for visiting us today. Senator Chizek, did you wish to speak on this? Thank you, gentlemen. That was the end of it. Senator Wesely, would you like to close. Senator Harris, did you wish recognition? Senator Wesely, to close.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, members, I know there is a lot of opposition to making any change. I understand that very well. It is the third year I have tried and the first two years I didn't succeed, and I am back, and I will be back every time I have to try and make this change. I think it is the right thing to do. Other businesses are doing it. We are seeing more and more of recognition that if you are going to ever have cost containment, it has got to be a shared burden on the cost between not only the employer but the employee and the incentives are all wrong under the present plan. I should emphasize, Senator Lynch pointed this out, we do start this plan January 1 of next year so the savings are not as great